SHQIPERIA E LIRE FREE ALBANIA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

Washington, D. C.
September 4, 1942

Honorable Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, D. C.

Excellency:

I have the honor to submit the following memorandum of my conversation with Mr. Michalopoulos, Greek Minister of Information.

As it may be well remembered Mr. Michalopoulos has stated in the Free Europe of London on February 27th last that "Northern Epirus belongs rightfully to Greece." Upon being criticized thereon by some English friends of Albania, the Greek Minister published a sort of retraction in the same weekly, but it was more of an evasion than a real retraction, inasmuch as he reserved the right of Greece to revive the same issue at the end of the hostilities.

I began by expressing to the Greek Minister my surprise that Greece should revive such obsolete claims on Albanian territories which have been definitely given up by all the succeeding Greek Governments since 1920. At the same time, I reminded him that the Axis propaganda has been making capital use of his claims in order to persuade the Albanian people that the salvation of their country lies in an all-out support of the Axis.

Mr. Michalopoulos replied by stating that it was all a mistake, that he had written without any authorization from his Government, that he had already retracted his claims and that no such claims will be put forward again for the duration of the war.

While taking note of these assurances, I told the Greek Minister that his Government will commit a grave error in reopening the issue at any time. For even if a plebiscite was to be held in the region in question, Greece will get less than 10 per cent of the total vote and that 10 per cent will represent only the 30,000 Greek Colonists of the Delvino and Dropulli enclave who have, on the other hand, been always recognized as a distinct racial minority and treated as such by the Albanian Government. Against that, I added, Albania has the right to claim the District of Chameria, now incorporated by the Italians in the Albanian State, and which has a population of 45,000 Albanians.

Then I gave him some data on the exact composition of the population of Northern Epirus which is but Southern Albania, my own native district.

Mr. Michalopoulos, who seemed to be considerably misinformed on the topic was impressed by the figures I gave. I then made a proposal to the effect that we exchanged written assurances to let things as they stand and proceed towards working out a plan of collaboration against Italy.

After a few moments of hesitation, the Greek Minister demurred on the exchange of such letter without the express authorization of his Government which he promised to ask for at once, but he was gravely interested in the plan of close collaboration against the common enemy.

Yet in spite of all the protestations of goodwill on the part of Mr. Michalopoulos, a disquieting impression crept on me that there was something else hidden in his mind, something which points almost unmistakably to the existence of secret and positive assurances that Greece's claims on Southern Albania would eventually find strong support from other powers. In the words he avoided using, rather than in those he actually did use with particular caution, Mr. Michalopoulos seemed to imply that Albania was to be considered after all as a terra nullius, and once or twice he hinted guardedly to the effect that her Statehood is no longer recognized and that she has no place among the United Nations. He went even so far as to belittle, if not to deny, the efforts of the Albanian guerrilla bands, and he was distinctly surprised when I told him that our guerrilla bands are in close collaboration with the Jugoslav Chetniks, this junction having been effected through my appeals to the Albanian guerrilla chiefs.

Your Excellency's most faithful and obedient servant,

C. A. Chekrezi

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Government- Greece. Conversation with Greek Ambassador who asked if this Government could not make some confidential communication to the Greek Government along lines of the assurances requested in memorandum submitted submitted.

768.7515/177

fp

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Memorandum
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Dec.21 From State Department
To Under Secretary (Welles)

File No. 875.01/459

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Reservation which the Greek Ambassador desires as regards Albanian frontiers. Suggestion for taking up with the Greek Ambassador.

fp

768.75151/78

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Memorandum
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Dec. 22, 1942 From / To State Department / NE (Kphler)

File No. 765.01/459

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

765.01/459

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INCOMING TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

JP-248
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SECRET)

Caserta

Dated October 23, 1944

Rec'd 8:23 a.m. 24th

OFFICE OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS DISTRIBUTION OCT 26 1944 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State

Washington

921, October 23, 5 p.m.

OSS reports that Hoxha has expressed himself as favoring Southern Albanian boundary set at conference of London in 1913. He takes position that Greeks in Albania should return to Greece and sees no justification for and would oppose a plebiscite in Southern Albania which he contends is definately Albanian. Hoxha further states that Albanians will fight for this territory if necessary. On other hand, Hoxha considers Kossovo problem can be settled only by Plebiscite.

KIRK

RB

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Central File: Decimal File 768.7515, Political Relations Of States, Relations; Bi-Lateral Treaties., Political., Greece And Albania, Boundary Questions. Composition Of Differences., September 4, 1942 - October 23, 1944. September 4, 1942 - October 23, 1944. MS Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States: Records of the U.S. Department of State, 1930-1944: Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations of Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States, 1940-1944. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5111396056%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbookmark-GDSC. Accessed 23 June 2025.